



## Michigan's booster seat use rate remains below 50 percent

Less than half of 4- to 7-year-olds in Michigan are using booster seats, which are shown to reduce serious injuries by nearly 50 percent. Parents and caregivers are reminded of the importance of booster use during National Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Week, Sept. 17-23.

A 2015 observation survey conducted by the Wayne State University Transportation Research Group found that booster usage is 49.7 percent for that age group. A 2008 state law requires children to be properly buckled in a car seat or booster seat until they are 8 years old or 4 feet 9 inches tall.

"Traffic crashes remain a leading cause of death nationwide among children. Car seats and boosters can prevent many of those fatalities and injuries," said Michael L. Prince, director of the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP). "Older children are more at risk as car seat use goes down despite boosters being less expensive and easier to use than seats for younger children. The beginning of a

new school year is a perfect time to focus on traffic safety for students as they are driven to classes, sports activities, and other events."

Booster seats lift the child up so the seat belt fits securely across their hips and shoulders, the strongest parts of the body. When children shorter than 4 feet 9 inches



tall don't use a booster, the belt does not fit comfortably and they are more likely to tuck the seat belt behind their back or under their arm which can cause injuries, including internal organ damage or trauma to the neck or head.

There's a five-step test for determining if children should ride without a booster. For

a video outlining those steps go to [www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyHjJHEHjGk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyHjJHEHjGk)

"Children must be in the correct seat for their size and that seat needs to be installed and used properly," Prince said. "Parents and caregivers can meet with trained car seat technicians to learn how to properly use seats."

Michigan has a network of more than 1,000 CPS technicians who assist with proper installation and use of car seats, boosters and seat belts. To make best use of a car seat check, drivers are asked to come with their vehicle, car seat, and child. The check usually takes up to 30 minutes. For a list of planned car seat checks, visit [Michigan.gov/carseats](http://Michigan.gov/carseats).

CPS Week is a national initiative to raise awareness for car seat use and encourage caregivers to have their children's car seats inspected by a certified CPS technician. The week culminates on National Seat Check Saturday.

## New report on bicyclist fatalities provides action steps for states

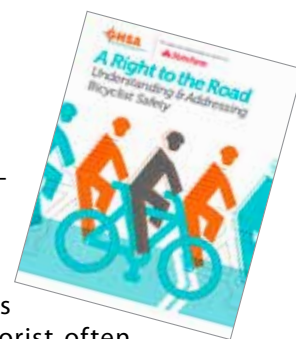
New research shows that bicyclist deaths rose 12.2 percent from 2014 to 818 in 2015, the largest percentage increase of all roadway user groups that year (the latest year in which data is available). But unlike decades ago, when children and teens represented the bulk of bicyclist fatalities, today the average age of those killed is 45, and 85 percent are male.

These findings are among many detailed in *A Right to the Road: Understanding & Addressing Bicyclist Safety*, a new report by the Governors Highway Safety Association. The publication analyzes national data to understand fatal bicyclist-motor vehicle crash characteristics and offers 30 action steps to help State Highway Safety Offices and local communities assess their current bicyclist safety programs and take action

to improve bicyclist safety.

A unifying theme in many of these crashes is that the motorist often fails to see the bicyclist, while the bicyclist expects the driver to give way and is unable to stop in time to avoid a crash. This

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# SAFETY Network

## Law enforcement says “Do a 360” to curb drunk driving



OHSP Director Michael L. Prince unveils the new 360-degree video.

The OHSP and law enforcement agencies are encouraging people to “Do a 360” before heading out for the night to highlight the potentially life-saving choices available to those who choose to drink responsibly. A new 360-degree video was unveiled in August as part of the recent *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* crackdown. It depicts how everyone can make a plan and assess their surroundings to help ensure they, and their friends, avoid drunk driving and get home safely. The interactive video can be found at [www.michigan.gov/360](http://www.michigan.gov/360).

“The Office of Highway Safety Planning works hard to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to communicating about how we can reduce drunk driving by encouraging people, especially young adults, to make a plan to get home safely,” said Michael L. Prince, OHSP director. “By asking people to ‘Do a 360’ we hope to bring a unique perspective to the issue of drunk driving and encourage people to make the right decision by finding a safe ride home.”

To “Do a 360,” the OHSP and law enforcement encourage anyone planning to consume alcohol to consider:

1. **How will you get there?** One reason people drive impaired: they don’t want to leave their car behind. If you take a cab, use a ride-sharing service, or choose a sober designated driver, you won’t have this problem.
2. **How will you get home?** Whether it’s a cab, ride-sharing service, or a sober designated driver—decide how you’ll get home safely.
3. **Who is coming along?** Don’t offer to drive if you’re planning to drink. Plan a safe way home for you and your friends. If your friends are driving separately, watch out for them. Friends don’t let friends drive drunk.

The OHSP continues to partner with the Michigan Licensed Beverage Association (MLBA) to remind bar patrons to drive sober or find a safe way home.

“Making sure customers get home safely is a top priority for bar owners, bartenders and staff,” said Scott Ellis, MLBA executive director. “We want to do everything we can to continue to reduce the number of intoxicated drivers who get behind the wheel and drive.”

In 2016 there were 271 alcohol-involved traffic fatalities and 32,610 drunk driving arrests in the state. Michigan law considers persons with a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .08 or greater to be driving drunk. Penalties for the first offense can include up to 93 days in jail and/or a fine up to \$500, with enhanced penalties for BAC of 0.17 or above. Convicted drunk drivers may have their license suspended and are subject to an additional \$1,000 penalty under the driver responsibility program for two consecutive years.

## What’s Ahead

### OCTOBER 2017

- 4 **Traffic Incident Management Action Team meeting.** Grand Traverse Metro Fire Station, 2025 East Silver Lake Road, Traverse City, 9:30 a.m.
- 10 **Occupant Protection Action Team meeting.** University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, 2901 Baxter Road, Ann Arbor, 10 a.m.
- 11 **Impaired Driving Action Team meeting.** Michigan State Police Headquarters, 7150 Harris Drive, Dimondale, 10 a.m.
- 17 **Traffic Safety Engineering Action Team meeting.** Horatio S. Earle Learning Center, 7575 Crown Drive, Dimondale, 9 a.m.
- 19 **Traffic Records and Information Systems Action Team meeting.** Michigan State Police Headquarters, 7150 Harris Drive, Dimondale, 1 p.m.
- 24 **Distracted Driving Action Team meeting.** Michigan State Police Headquarters, 7150 Harris Drive, Dimondale, 1 p.m.

### NOVEMBER 2017

- 1 **Michigan Truck Safety Commission meeting.** Michigan Center for Truck Safety, 1131 Centennial Way, Lansing, 9 a.m.
- 1 **Drivers 24 and Younger Action Team meeting.** Horatio S. Earle Learning Center, 7575 Crown Drive, Dimondale, 10 a.m.
- 9 **Senior Mobility and Safety Action Team Meeting.** Horatio S. Earle Learning Center, 7575 Crown Drive, Dimondale, 1:30 p.m.
- 14 **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Action Team meeting.** Horatio S. Earle Learning Center, 7575 Crown Drive, Dimondale, 9 a.m.

# SAFETY Network

## Marijuana impaired driving cases will continue to present unique challenges

By Kenneth Stecker and Brian Thiede

In 2015, more than 35,000 people were killed in traffic crashes.<sup>1</sup> Nearly a third of those involved an impaired driver.<sup>2</sup> The National Roadside Survey conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration demonstrates the increased use of marijuana by our nation's drivers.

In the 2013-2014 roadside survey of weekend nighttime drivers, 8.3 percent had some alcohol in their system and 12.6 percent tested positive for THC<sup>3</sup>—up 48 percent from the number in 2007.<sup>4</sup> Since a majority of states have legalized marijuana for medical and/or recreational use,<sup>5</sup> marijuana-impaired driving cases will continue to present unique challenges for prosecutors and law enforcement.

Numerous scientific studies demonstrate the relationship between alcohol and the impairment of driving function supporting these “per se” laws. There are challenges, however, to provide the same support for marijuana “per se” laws.

Some of the issues surrounding the challenges to studies that would scientifically support a marijuana “per se” level include:

- Varying concentrations of THC in marijuana. Generally, the concentrations used in studies are much lower than what is available in real-life settings. Additionally, concentrations vary

depending on the form of marijuana ingested.

- Differences between users of marijuana. A chronic, frequent user may develop tolerance to some effects of marijuana but not all effects, including the impairing effect. The effect of THC consumption on impairment of driving performance may be higher for occasional, recreational users than for frequent users.
- Differences in ingestion of marijuana. Smoked marijuana leads to a different absorption rate and release rate of the psychoactive ingredient than does eating marijuana edibles.
- Combined use of marijuana and alcohol or marijuana and other drugs. Various studies have demonstrated that the combined use is associated with significantly greater cognitive impairment and crash risk than the use of one alone.<sup>6</sup>

In terms of marijuana-impaired driving, legislative change has occurred more quickly than the pace of the scientific research on the issue.<sup>7</sup> This leaves fundamental questions about a standard for determining whether an individual's ability to operate a vehicle safely is impaired by marijuana as well as the means which the individual's present status may be measured.

Some practical items to consider prior to setting a “per se” level for marijuana impairment:

- **Lack of scientific research.** There is little scientific research supporting marijuana “per se” levels similar to alcohol. Setting a limit for marijuana is strictly based on public policy and in no way means an individual testing below the level is not impaired at the time of driving.
- **“Per se” levels.** Even a low “per se” level will miss significant numbers of impaired drivers. Based on the THC concentration distribution in the larger population data set of arrested drivers and similar observations by other groups, indiscriminate selection of a 5 ng/mL threshold for per se laws virtually guarantees that approximately 70 percent of all cannabis using drivers, whose actions led to them being arrested, will escape prosecution under a 5 ng/mL per se standard.<sup>8</sup>
- **Sample collection and toxicology testing.** Blood testing is the most effective testing method for marijuana, but is the most invasive and costly. Securing a blood sample requires a search warrant that may add a significant delay in specimen collection. This in turn may inhibit the ability to secure information about marijuana in

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1. NHTSA press release, “Traffic fatalities up sharply in 2015,” <https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/traffic-fatalities-sharply-2015>, accessed February 23, 2017. See also Traffic Safety Facts: Research Note. 2015 Motor Vehicle Crashes: Overview, DOT HS 812 318, August 2016.

2. Traffic Safety Facts: Research Note. 2015 Motor Vehicle Crashes: Overview, DOT HS 812 318, August 2016.

3. THC is Delta 9 Tetrahydrocannabinol and is the psychoactive substance in marijuana.

4. Traffic Safety Facts: Research Note. Results of the 2013-2014 National Roadside Survey of Alcohol and Drug Use by Drivers, by Amy Berning, Richard Compton, and Kathryn Wochinger, DOT HS 812 118, February 2015.

5. <http://www.ncsl.org/research/civil-and-criminal-justice/marijuana-overview.aspx>, accessed February 23, 2017.

6. See “Establishing legal limits for driving under the influence of marijuana,” *Injury Epidemiology* 1:26, Kristin Wong, Joanne E Brady and Guohua Li (2014).

7. “Cognitive and Clinical Neuroimaging Core,” *Marijuana Investigations for Neuroscientific Discovery*, Dr. Staci Gruber, <http://drstacigruber.com/mind/>, accessed on February 23, 2017.

8. AAA Foundation.org. “An Evaluation of Data from Drivers Arrested for Driving Under the Influence in Relation to per se Limits for Cannabis,” May 2016, p. 25.





# SAFETY Network

## Wingrove named OHSP's new communications section manager



Kendall Wingrove has been selected as OHSP's new communications section manager. He has been with the OHSP since March 2015. Wingrove's past responsibilities as senior editor included supervising OHSP's publications production, working on mobilization/crackdown campaigns, coordinating public information and education initiatives, and editing annual reports.

Before joining the OHSP, Wingrove served as media services manager in the Michigan Senate and director of communications in the Michigan House of Representatives. He has extensive experience working with legislators, state agency officials, and advocacy groups in developing and communicating public policy.

Wingrove has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Central Michigan University and a master's degree in journalism from Michigan State University.

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the blood at the time of driving (and the inference of impairment at driving) because of how quickly marijuana transfers from blood to lipid soluble tissues in body. Further, obtaining a search warrant in a routine impaired driving case takes valuable time from the necessary duties of a law enforcement officer.

- **Standardized protocols.** Standardized testing protocols would need to be developed for each type of sample secured.
- **Additional resources.** Dedicated resources continue to be put in place to train law enforcement officers in the signs and symptoms of marijuana impairment and how to properly document it and train officers through Michigan's Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving and Enforcement Program or the Drug Recognition Expert Program.

- **"Per se" limit for marijuana when combined with alcohol or other drugs.** If a "per se" limit is to be set up it would require legislative change establishing strict liability for an individual found to have any level of marijuana (THC) in his blood at the time of testing when combined with any level of alcohol or the presence of any other drug. Including "time of testing" language may help minimize the problem created by the quick dissipation of THC out of the blood as well as avoid attempts to relate amounts back to the time of driving.

*Editor's Note: Brian Thiede is the Mecosta County Prosecuting Attorney. Kenneth Stecker is a Michigan Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor. For more information on this article and PAAM training programs, contact Stecker at [steckerk@michigan.gov](mailto:steckerk@michigan.gov) or Kinga Gorzelewski at [gorzelewskik@michigan.gov](mailto:gorzelewskik@michigan.gov).*

*Please consult your prosecutor before adopting practices suggested by reports in this article. Discuss your practices that relate to this article with your commanding officers, police legal advisors, and the prosecuting attorney before changing your practice.*

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illustrates the need for all people to pay attention to their surroundings whenever they take to the road.

Other important data presented in the report includes where and when fatal bicyclist-motor vehicle crashes are occurring (72 percent in non-intersection locations, and 53 percent between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., respectively). Alcohol was a factor in 37 percent of the 2015 bicyclist fatalities for either the cyclist or the driver. The report acknowledges limitations on the currently available data and calls for states and localities to refine crash reports to improve the accuracy of the data collected.

Better crash data is just one of the 30 recommendations. Other key suggestions include: more training for law enforcement to understand state and local laws designed to protect bicyclists; partnering with bicycling and community organizations to amplify driver and cyclist safety messaging; and pairing infrastructure improvements with public education.

The report also outlines federal safety efforts, possible funding sources, partner organizations, and a wide range of promising state and local programs and policies that communities can use to encourage safer behavior by all road users, whether traveling by bicycle, motor vehicle or on foot.

For more information go to <http://www.ghsa.org/resources/bicyclist-safety2017>.

# SAFETY Network

## S4SD seeks high school applications

Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for teens. *Strive for a Safer Drive* (S4SD) is a great opportunity for school leaders to instruct teens about safe driving through peer-to-peer teaching. Anyone at the school can oversee the program but it is most often led by groups such as Students Against Destructive Decisions, Distributive Education Clubs of America, Student Leadership Services, National Honor Society, Student Council, Student Senate, Link Crew, and others such as English teachers, counselors, school liaison officers, and driver education, audio visual, leadership development, and health education instructors.

All Michigan high schools are eligible to participate and receive \$1,000 to create a traffic safety campaign. Schools showcase their campaign in a PowerPoint or video and cash prizes will be awarded to the top five schools. Participating schools also have the opportunity to attend the Ford Ride and Drive Event in the spring.

Up to 60 schools that apply by November 3 will receive a \$100 Visa gift card.

All applications are due by November 17.

For more information, visit the S4SD website at [michigan.gov/S4SD](http://michigan.gov/S4SD) or contact Tony Surman, the program coordinator, at 248-334-4971 ext. 301, or email at [Strive4aSaferDrive@gmail.com](mailto:Strive4aSaferDrive@gmail.com)



Clarkston High School finished first in the 2017 S4SD competition

## Rueckert selected as OHSP's new executive secretary



Kara Rueckert was recently named OHSP's new executive secretary. She joined the OHSP in April 2014 and has extensive experience providing administrative

support services to all OHSP staff and managers.

Rueckert has been a key contributor in many of OHSP's high-profile events and training programs.

Before coming to the OHSP, she served as a customer service representative for business registration at the Michigan Department of Treasury.

She received the Good Government Coin for her work in customer service.

A Michigan native, Rueckert spent most of her adolescent years in Orlando, Florida, before moving back to Michigan in 2010 to be closer to family.

Rueckert has an associate's degree in psychology from Florida Gulf Coast University and a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of Central Florida. She is pursuing a master's in business administration with a concentration in strategic management at Davenport University.

## Bawol recognized for state service

The OHSP's executive secretary, Janet Hengesbach Bawol, left the OHSP and state service on September 1 to relocate to northern Michigan with her family. She served the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission (GTSAC), Michigan Truck Safety Commission and OHSP as executive secretary since 2011. Prior to the OHSP she served seven years as section secretary with the State 911 Office. Bawol was recognized for her years of service on August 29 with a presentation by OHSP Director Michael Prince and State 911 Director Harriet Miller-Brown.



## Judge Bowler honored

Every year the National Center for DWI Courts recognizes an individual with the DWI Court Leadership Award.

Judge Patrick Bowler, retired from Kent County, was this year's recipient during a July awards ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Bowler, judicial liaison with the OHSP, was cited for his leadership in training of

treatment court professionals on a local, state, and national level. He is a board member of the Michigan Association of Treatment Court Professionals.



# SAFETY Network

## GTSAC seeks nominations for outstanding traffic safety achievements



Each year the GTSAC honors individuals, organizations, and programs by presenting awards for outstanding contributions to traffic safety in Michigan. This is a chance to honor the best of the state's traffic safety community: people of all ages who are motivated to seek changes and improvements and who work effectively as an individual or as part of a team.

### OUTSTANDING TRAFFIC SAFETY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Award winners will be individuals or organizations whose contributions during 2015-2017 are judged to stand above

others in the state. Nominations must include a well-defined problem and present clear and measurable results.

### STUDENT AWARD

The GTSAC will recognize a high school or college student engaged in a traffic safety program.

### RICHARD H. AUSTIN LONG-TERM TRAFFIC SAFETY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Award winners will be individuals or organizations judged to best represent "the spirit of traffic safety" through a sustained, long-term contribution (10 years or longer) and commitment to traffic safety in Michigan.

### INDIVIDUALS, COALITIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS, AGENCIES

Multiple programs or a single, long-term traffic safety effort are eligible. GTSAC member agencies are not eligible.

The GTSAC will present the awards on March 21, 2018, during the Michigan Traffic Safety Summit at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing.

Award nominations must be received by November 3. An electronic version of the nomination form is available at [Michigan.gov/gtsac](http://Michigan.gov/gtsac).

## October and November are dangerous months for deer/vehicle crashes

In 2016, there were 46,870 deer crashes in Michigan, according to the Criminal Justice Information Center. As a result of those

collisions, 1,240 people were injured and 14 people were killed.

October and November are the most dangerous months for deer crashes.

To help avoid dangerous encounters with deer, it is important to remember the following safety tips:

- Stay awake, alert, and sober.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- Be especially alert at dawn and dusk.
- Reduce your speed when traveling through deer-population areas.

If you see one deer, slow down as others are likely nearby.

If a crash with a deer is unavoidable, don't swerve. Remember to brake firmly, hold onto the steering wheel, stay in your lane, bring your car to a controlled stop, and steer the vehicle well off the roadway.



23RD ANNUAL MICHIGAN TRAFFIC SAFETY SUMMIT

## SAVE THE DATE

MARCH 20-22, 2018

Online registration will open in late 2017.

KELLOGG HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER, EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN

# Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning FY2018 Traffic Safety Campaigns

OCTOBER 2017	NOVEMBER 2017	DECEMBER 2017	JANUARY 2018
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4	1 2	1 2 3 4 5 6
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FEBRUARY 2018	MARCH 2018	APRIL 2018	MAY 2018
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Date	Event
Oct. 15-21	Teen Driver Safety Week social media effort
Oct. 31	Halloween social media effort
Nov. 22-Dec. 10	Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over crackdown
Feb. 3-4	Super Bowl social media effort
March 20-22	Michigan Traffic Safety Summit
April 9-22	Distracted Driving Awareness Month/enforcement mobilization

Date	Event
May 21-June 3	Click It or Ticket mobilization
July 4	Fourth of July Social media effort
Aug. 17-Sept. 3	Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over crackdown
Sept. 16-22	Child Passenger Safety Week
Sept. 22	National Seat Check Saturday